Students Unleash Giant

From Terminals to Tic Tac Toe

By Mark Traphagen

Captain's Log, star date 3/ 14/ 07. Under orders from Star Fleet Command, the U.S.S. Enterprise is proceeding into Quadrant 7-4 to search for and destroy any vessels of the deadly Klingon Empire.

Although the warp engines are nearly critical, and Scotty has informed you that he can't be responsible for what happens, you refuse to turn back.

A scan with the Enterprise's short range sensors discovers three Klingon battle cruisers in Sector 5. Reacting instinctively, you order the helm to fire a spread of three photon torpedoes at course 3.9.

THE BATTLE COMPUTER indicates that all the Klingon ships have been obliterated, and the Enterprise warps out to the nearest Star Base.

Some hazily-remembered plot from a "Star Trek" rerun? No, it's only one of a number of games that can be played against a computer in the Data Center.

Located in Room 322 of Miriam Hall, the Data Center houses eight teletype terminals, as well as several keypunches, that are available as needed to any student, faculty or staff member with a valid user's identification. The identification is a code of symbols that allows only those with an ID to unleash the power of the transistorized giant just down the hall from the Data Center.

EACH OF THE TERMINALS in the Data Center and others scattered around the UD campus are connected to a Univac Series

MARK TRAPHAGEN and friend

FN/ Terry McBride

70/ 7 computer housed on the third floor of Miriam Hall.

The computer has a storage capacity of over 100 million bytes (characters) when combined with its magnetic tape and disc driven storage systems.

The cost of maintaining the computer system is met through UD funding and the sale of computer time to commercial users.

While the computer is intended mainly for the use of computer science students who pay a lab fee, faculty and staff, Ron McAdams, acting director of the Office of Computing Activities, emphasized that the services of his department are available to all students.

"WE USUALLY HAVE let students use the system on a fairly open-ended basis," he said. There is a limit to the amount of computer time each student can use each month, but it has been determined that only about 2 per cent of all students exceed this allotment.

A statement signed when students apply for a user's identification prohibits them from using their alloted computer time for monetary gain, but students may purchase additional time from the computing activities office and use it as they wish.

Learning to operate the computer terminals for the relatively simple matter of playing games is easy enough. Over 800 pages of instructional manuals are available in the Data Center, ranging from an introduction to the computer to outline manuals in languages such as BASIC and FORTRAN.

Dr. Mike May, manager of academic services in computing activities, suggests that interested students take the one credit-hour introductory course that is offered.

BESIDES "STAR TREK" the program library of the Data Center offers other games. "Moonlanding" pits the players' reflexes against gravity as they try to land a ship on the moon before running out of fuel. In "Golf," the player selects clubs and plays nine holes at the hazard-filled UD Golf Course.

"Tic Tac Toe" is a variation of that simple game played against the computer. In "Football," the player becomes the coach of a professional football team and directs plays and strategy against the computer.

"The Game of Nim" is a type of computerized "Pick-Up Sticks" in which the player tries to be the last with sticks. "Blackjack" is played the same way as the card game, with the computer acting as dealer and recording winnings and losses. Finally, for mathematicians, there is "WFF," a game of preposition calculus.

To obtain a computer services user identification, any undergraduate or graduate student completes a short application available at the Data Center window in Miriam 332.

THE APPLICATION will take several days to process. The user identification is valid until 30 days after the end of the summer term of each academic year.

As a matter of courtesy, game players are asked to stop their games if there are computer science students waiting to do assignments.

The Office of Computing Activities asks game players not to use the terminals during peak-load periods, such as afternoons, near mid-term, and the last three weeks of the summer.

'Don Juan' warm, jazzy

By Arthur Glover
Music Critic

Joni Mitchell's latest, "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter," begins with a rambling, disjointed jazz overture. As Mitchell's rich, airy voice sails above her lush guitar interlude,

Placement delay

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Martin said he had to make a decision between the 100 students waiting in line and the 10 or 12 he had previously told about Tuesday sign-ups.

Those students he had told about Tuesday sign-ups, Martin said, have been taken care of by "squeezing them in the lists here and there." Martin said he was aware that students were upset about the mix-up but he is trying to be as "fair as I can."

MARTIN SAID he had "never forseen weather being a problem for the placement office." He said this was the first mix-up the office has had in five years. In order to avoid the same problem Martin said he will review the procedures involved in sign-ups. He said it will be stated on the calendar (which is distributed to the students listing the job placements available) that if the University is closed sign-ups will be held the next regular school day.

Martin said the weather problem is "something we didn't expect, but it is something we must plan on."

we know that this will by no means be an ordinary pop album. Anyone who has followed Mitchell's distinguished and fruitful career would know that her albums have become anything but ordinary, and this new two-record set is no exception. This is a continuation of the ambitious, jazz-oriented work of 1975's "The Hissing of Summer Lawns" and 1976's "Hejira."

On "Don Juan's Reckless Daughter," Mitchell works closely with her back-up band (which includes members of Weather Report and her usual drummer John Guerin) to create a complex, intricate instrumentation that is at first confusing and tiring, but after repeated listenings becomes compelling and quite arresting.

This is a work for discriminating tastes only; in fact, I did not warm to it until after a few honest bursts of determination. But after becoming accustomed to the album's occasional pretensions and obscurities, one can acquire a lasting taste for it.

Mitchell's guitar work here is excellent, and her vocals are constantly surprising; her voice has matured from her earlier days, and now has a more full-bodied, warm, jazzy flair.

THE REAL INTEREST of the album, of course, are the songs. Mitchell commands a poetic, personal writing style which seems difficult to rival in today's

popular music. Side one is the most consistently successful side, which includes a humorous, sensuous come-on called "Talk to Me." This side also includes one of the album's best tunes, "Jericho," in which Mitchell expresses to her lover her promise to be more open in beautifully simple lyrics:

"I'll try and keep myself
    open up to you
It gets easier and easier to
    do
Just like Jericho
Let these walls come
    tumbling down now
Let them fall right on the
    ground."*

Side two consists of an over 16-minute long cut called "Paprika Plains," an ambitious cut which begins with Mitchell's piano, builds to a sort of concerto with full orchestration, and

finishes with a rhythm track and soprano sax solo. It is quite an undertaking, and although it is slightly overlong, it is daring and soars with beautifully contrasting orchestration.

Mitchell's ambitiousness can sometimes lead to pretensions, the price any artist pays when over-extending herself. Side three begins well with "Otis and Marlena," an ambiguous song with particularly distinguished guitar work by Mitchell.

Side four immediately diminishes the bitter taste with three excellent songs. It ends with "The Silky Veils of Ardor," a song about the dangers and fears of romance, which features Mitchell's intense vocal and sublime guitar. It is a fitting conclusion to an extraordinary album.

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